Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA. The objective of this scheme is to address the grand challenges of poverty, literacy, education, health, employment, and micro-entrepreneurship through the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), on a large co-ordinated scale, using futuristic technology and both academic and non-academic input with creativity, sensitivity, and with a focus on affordable accessibility.

Statement-II

IT benefits to Hindi and other Indian languages speaking population

Department of IT has setup 13 Resource centres for Technology Development in Indian Languages in various parts of the country. These centres have the responsibility of developing tools and technology for application/use of computers in all the 18 constitutionally recognised local languages of India.

Localisation of technology and Content Creation in Hindi and making the content available on computer and Internet, is being spearheaded in Hindi speaking states under the programme: Content Development and IT Localisation Network (Coil-Net).

Both the above initiatives of the Department of IT also directly/ indirectly benefit the rural masses.

The IT projects implemented for rural areas by NIC (mentioned in Annexure I) are also in local languages, and often use icon-based interfaces etc, in order to minimise difficulties experienced by literates/semi-literates.

Samadhan Kendra projects already mentioned at 1.2 caters to the needs of rural people, hence these have strong local language interfaces apart from English. The contents are presented in Tamil (in Ramanathapuram distt.), Telugu (in West Godavri distt. AP), and Hindi in case of Ujjain and Chitrakoot MP).

Disruption of telephone services

201. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that STD services between Delhi and various places in District Kangra and Mandi in Himachal Pradesh remain disrupted for most of the period during the year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that most of the telephones in the above places remain out of order for most of the period during the year;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government have made any efforts to avoid such disruption in future; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Replacement of Telephone Machines/Spares in Rural Exchanges

†202. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to replace old machines and spares with new ones and provide power back up generators in rural telephone exchanges keeping in view the difficulties being faced by telephone consumers;

(b) if so, whether Government are going to make such arrangement in Telehone exhange-Jangla, located at Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, a fully rural and hilly area; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Replacement of equipment is subject to expiry of the prescribed life and availability of new equipment. Power backup Generators are also provided in the rural exchanges.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) There is a plan to provide Engine Alternator at Jangla during year 2003-04.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.